16 JUN 1932

FIRST SAMANTHA CONFERENCE.

A special feature of the **first** Samantha Conference, which was held under the patronage of the Raja of Nilambur, was the presence of ladies of the ***Kovilagam*** who usually observe *purdah*.

16 JUN 1932

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MUTABILITY

BY HERBERT PORTER.

Man is gay,
Man is sad,
Hope is high,
Mirth is glad.

Age is short,
Time is long,
Life is slow,
Youth is strong.

Day is light,
Night is dark,
Summer's sweet,
Winter's stark.

Pleasures flit,
Vanish friends,
Daylight dawns,
Daylight ends.

Nature droops,
Skies do frown,
Merry thoughts
Sorrows drown.

All is change,
Change is all.
Shadows rise,
Shadows fall.

Beauty dies,
Life must go;
Earth's a magic
Shadow-show !

THE WOMANHOOD OF INDIA

BY MANJERI R. KRISHNAN.

SIGNS are evident, that waves of the new age have reached the enclosed courtyard of the Indian home, and the women of India have been roused from their comparatively slumbering consciousness to the message of the age to which they really belong. There is a growing spirit of eagerness in the West to learn and appreciate the true life and ideals of the East. Strictly speaking, the Indian woman has been handicapped up till now, either by her own seclusion or her lack of co-operation in the social activities of the modern age, and this has tended to the inadequate recognition of her progress in the modern cultural co-operation between the East and the West. The cause for this lack of recognition cannot be found in the want of Western education. In fact, many of our women have been educated on Western lines, but they received the education through the opinionated agency of their Westernised fathers or husbands and used it merely as a decorative accomplishment, thus failing to reveal their true personality by the development of their own inherent powers and potentialities for noble deeds. This paved the way for the growth of two sections of educated women, one of them forming a handful of Westernised English-educated women, and the other being a vast number of women steeped in the culture of medieval India, both sides living side by side in terms of complete detachment and misunderstanding.

However, such a state of affairs cannot last long. Indications of a great change are apparent in the status of the womanhood of India during recent years. The Indian woman is no more the shy housewife that she used to be, nor has she become a thoroughly Westernised one, blindly and indiscriminately imitating all that comes out of the West by way of fashion or recreation. The most outstanding feature of the modern development of the woman's movement in India, is that with the gradual infiltration and absorption of foreign education into their lives, they have begun to think and work towards the betterment of their position and the breaking-up of a system that has kept them bound in unjustifiable limitations. The noble response of our women to the call of the national renaissance and the active co-operation that they have given to the cause of nation—building have automatically dispelled hampering social bondages and brought them on to the path of fresh developments in freedom, so that they already begin to stand on a solidifying basis of self-knowledge. However, this movement among our women does not go uncriticised altogether. The more conservative sections of our community still level their attacks against it, deeming it the sign of a mere imitation of the West, forgetting all the while that women, having been born in a new age, have to draw their life-force from a common source of changed conditions. Orthodox men still think that the women of India have lost the ancient glory and

superiority, which their predecessors had during the epic age, and that they have sunk to the lowest depths of degradation by their blind and base imitation. Of course, the condition of our women during the epic age was far superior to what it is now. But the cause for the decline of this superiority during later times is due to the fact that man's ideas regarding women have not approached the path of rationality.

The epic age adorned the pages of Indian history with a galaxy of brilliant stars like Sita, Savitri and Damayanti. Coming to a more recent period of Indian history, the names of heroic Rajput women, like Padmini of Chittore and many others, come to mind. The entire history of the Rajput race, beginning from its hey-day of supremacy to its down-fall through the protracted years of struggle with the Muhamedan conquerors of India, is replete with the tales of bravery and heroism of its women. The Rajput women fought battles, inspired the soldiers with enthusiasm and love of country, took care of the wounded and fallen, and resisted the attacks of their enemies on the honour of their womanhood and the sanctity of their home. If France seeks glory in a Joan of Arc and England in a Florence Nightingale, India can feel proud a thousand times more in noble daughters like Samjukta, Mahamaya, Chandbibi, Rani Bhawani, Padmini and Mirabhai, who have immortalised the name of their motherland by their noble qualities of head and heart, by their stainless purity and above all by their boundless love for humanity.

The spirit of freedom that existed among our women from early times can never be said to have been altogether inspired by the West, for such a spirit did not at all exist in Europe till the advent of the modern era. History bears enough proof of this. The light of a new awakening that so inspires and illuminates the woman of India is, *ipso facto*, not the result of a mere imitation of the West, but the necessary out-come of a deep and progressive realisation of the ancient glory that truly belongs to her race and a perpetual cultural inflorescence that has influenced her through the ages. Apart from remaining merely as parts of an unchanged living pyramid of curiosity for visitors from abroad, the women of modern India have begun to move along with the spirit of the times for the preservation of a distinct individuality in the realms of religion, literature and social economy, nay, even politics. The incorporation of the cultural refinements of Western social system into that of our own, apart from its advanced liberalism, is sure to mark a progressive step in the social regeneration of modern Indian women, which will enable them to appreciate more deeply the cultural gifts of their own motherland.

No sudden revolution, however, can ever bring in a thorough regeneration of the women of our country; if it should be lasting, it has to be a process of gradual evolution. Strictly speaking our women have not yet become fully gifted to offer the matured gifts of their ancient culture to human civilization. They have to accomplish many hard tasks, the most important of them being the breaking-away of the shackles of harsh unmeaning customs and social laws, that still keep them pinned to their

own limited sphere of domestic life. Yet Indian women are freer far in a number of ways than their sisters in the West, who still suffer under the evils of militant materialism. Were we to ransack the pages of our past tradition, we shall find, that we have ever been enjoined to look upon our women as the incarnations of the mother-divine and as the symbols of blessedness and purity. While condemning the prevalence of drab monotony and joyless isolation in the multitude of our Indian women, one never likes to advocate the fruitless expenditure of energy entailed in the West by unmeaning luxuries of dress and social amusement. Let there be freedom of intiative among our women, wholesome activities at home and abroad, but let them not forget that they are still the worthy descendants of the heroines of our past ; let them live true to the rich legacy that has been left behind by their divine mothers ; and then we may be sure that "The hand that rocks the cradle will rule the world" henceforth.

"She had the feeling that a whole epoch was finished for her. The ignorance of her youth had died. She could never be spiritually ignorant any more. Her spirit had received education. Feeling that, she felt also the necessity that lay upon her of making a great effort after readjustment. She felt, not only that she must embark upon a new type of life, but that she must be new in it. She could not be just the old person living in a new way. Destiny had been too drastic with her for that. She would never again be exactly as she had been.

She had had a new conception of love, a new conception of life. She had been made to understand for the first time the inner meaning of unselfishness. She hoped she would be able to convey something fine, not a cheap merchandise of the soul.

She would have to begin again. How difficult it would be. Hitherto as a rule she had dealt with life comfidently. She would not be able to do that now. She had felt herself to be a young expert. Now she was full of the timidity of knowledge. Love had taught her to be humble.

The snows seemed so close that she imagined that a fly crawling over them would be visible to her. And yet there was a far-away look about them too, a white, remote unearthliness like that of a vision. And she knew that in human nature, which loves to wallow, there is neverthless rooted the strange contradiction, the impulse to mount. Yes, the impulse of the Alpine climber is an impulse of all humanity, perhaps felt in very rare moments by the greater part of humanity, but felt at some moment of life by everyone".

(From "The God within him", by Robert Hichens.)

THE ROMANCE OF QUEENS

CATHERINE II: THE SEMIRAMIS OF RUSSIA.

(AN EXAMPLE OF PERVERTED GREATNESS)

BY N. B.

THE personality and career of Catherine II, styled the Great, Empress of Russia, offers to us a peculiar interest, unlike that of any other crowned lady of Europe. A strong-willed and highly accomplished German princess, grafted on the loose moral soil of the Russion Imperial court, she early imbibed all the vices attendant thereon, and exhibited throughout her long and infamous life, a moral perversity and incorrigibility, unexampled in the annals of modern history. In an age when the moral code of man was restricted in theory and that of woman actually hedged in on all sides by religion, custom and convention, she was the only woman, who had the audacity to throw convention to the winds.

Though occupying a great throne and consequently placed in the full limelight, she flouted public opinion in a manner, which in any other, would have resulted in the direst calamities. Her life was still more remarkable in the fact, that she was uniformly obeyed by her subjects, respected by her royal neighbours, and extolled by famous men of letters of her age. She possessed wit and a will far above the average, which helped her to sail smooth in the ocean of love-intrigues, through which she set out to voyage. Her love affairs were the subject of common scandal all over Europe. Yet, she lived and ruled long and vigorously.

Sophia Augusta Frederica Catherine, to give her her full babtismal name, was the daughter of Prince Anhalt Zerbst, a general in the Prussian army and military commandant at Stettin. She was distantly related to the Russian royal family through her mother. Catherine, according to the custom prevailing in princely German families at the time, had her early education through French governesses and tutors, and learnt the refinement, delicacy and feminine accomplishments of her age. The then ruler of Russia, Empress Elizabeth, was in search of a suitable bride for her adopted heir, the Archduke Peter, and her choice fell on Catherine. This was unaccountable, in view of the fact that Elizabeth was on terms of bitter enmity with the great Frederic of Prussia, and her heir Peter, being also a German, though descended through her sister, entertained decidedly pro-German feelings. It was believed, however, that Frederic himself by a series of astute diplomatic manouvres, had brought about the choice. Catherine was brought to Russia in her fifteenth year and betrothed to the grand-duke Peter. She quickly succeeded in ingratiating herself in the affections of the Empress.

With eagerness, she mastered the Russian language. She applied herself so hard to her studies, that, on several occasions, she was observed walking barefoot in her rooms at night, trying to remember her lessons. Though brought up as a staunch Lutheran, she voluntarily abandoned her faith on coming to Russia and joined the Orthodox Russian Greek Church, in which she was re-babtised under the name of Catherine Alexeyona. Thus, even at so early an age, she learnt enough of worldly wisdom to be able to accomplish her ends. She related in her memoirs that she had resolved to do whatever had to be done and to profess to believe whatever had to be believed, in order to qualify herself to wear the crown on which she had set her heart. She was married to the Archduke in August 1745.

The Archduke Peter was exactly the reverse of Catherine in character. A scion of the house of Holstein, he could not conceal his pro-German tendencies and kept about him his own Holsteinians. He made no secret of his contempt for the Russians and succeeded in making himself thoroughly hated and unpopular in the country over which he had come to rule. He was coarse, stupid, and delighted in brutal practical jokes. Added to these unenviable qualities, his face was disfigured by small-pox. It was therefore no wonder that his beautiful and accomplished wife thought fit to choose more pleasing companions. Cleverer and more resourceful than her husband, surrounded by gallant and handsome admirers and with the example of her mother-in-law's corrupt court, it was easy for her to choose the wrong line and become thoroughly immoral. The Empress, suspecting her conduct, set up court officials to watch her, but those very custodians were eventually drawn into Catherine's net and became loyal agents of her pleasure and ambition. Her husband, though detesting her, also dreaded her; and her abilities forced even him to rely on her judgment. He would fly to her, when confronted by any difficult situation, and implicitly follow her advice, though at other times he did not scruple to ill-treat her, even to the extent of kicking her. He used to address her in his fonder moments, as "Madame La Ressource". He endeavoured, however, to turn the Empress against her, and Catherine was in danger. But, thanks to her cleverness, she eventually succeeded in regaining her influence over her mother-in-law.

After ten years, Catherine gave birth to a son, who was named Paul and who afterwards rose to the throne as Paul III. We find that Catherine had not much love to lavish on the boy and, later in his life, rigorously excluded him from any share in the administration till the very end of her reign.

The Empress Elizabeth died in 1762, and Catherine, unrestrained now in her ambitious projects, began openly to create her own party. Peter, conscious of his inferiority in intelligence and courage and most probably afraid for his life, fled with his Holsteinians, leaving Catherine at St. Petersburg. Now was her chance. She set to work with her usual vigour and succeeded in persuading the Imperial regiments to declare Archduke Peter unfit to rule, and proclaim her the Empress. This was easily done, inasmuch as the Orlov brothers, who controlled the Imperial guards were her principal lovers. The

greater part of the nobility, moreover, hated the Archduke, and Catherine had only to signify her willingness to take the sole responsibility of the Empire on her shoulders. Some feeble opposition was easily beaten down. The Archduke was captured and sent to a country house and kept under guard, where he died shortly afterwards, through what was officially notified as apoplexy. But the incident leaves us much in doubt, and it was not improbable that he met his death violently at the hands of his enemies.

So, at last Catherine attained her heart's desire and became sole Empress of Russia. For a small German Princess, without any hereditary claim, to rule independently and successfuly over the largest Empire in the world with the loyal concurrence of her subjects, was a feat demanding the highest powers of command and organisation. Catharine, however, was equal to the occasion. She kept her subjects in good humour, averting any possibility of discontent and trouble. She possessed an easy and tolerant spirit. She was never irritated with anyone for merely contradicting her. But, when she thought that the security of the state or her own authority was at stake, she did not scruple to utilise the barbarous methods, then in vogue, of mutilation, torture and death to reduce opposition. She introduced many reforms into her internal administration, in fact, too many to be able to complete any, which she left to her successors to tackle. Her foreign policy was mainly directed towards the further expansion and greatness of Russia. She desired to annex Poland and rule it through her old lover Stanislaus, whose election to the Polish throne she was instrumental in procuring. But, the jealousy and insistence of her neighbours, Prussia and Austria, led her to consent to its partition among them and to its final obliteration from the map of Europe. This was the most shameful political act of her time, to which even England and France remained dumb witnesses. She constituted herself the protector of the Christian subjects of the Porte and sent an expedition against it, but abandoned it afterwards, on account of the jealousy and opposition of the Western European powers. Her political philosophy was like that which guided her private life and, hating any system, she believed that a strong ruler must ever be guided by circumstances.

Catherine was fond of writing and she produced many pamphlets, plays and other works. But her best literary merit lies in her letters, which reveal an uncommon vivacity, insight and wit. She carried on a correspondence with Voltaire and other literary celebrities of the period. She showed her appreciation of them also by large gifts, and utilised them as a means of spreading her reputation. The celebrated Voltaire spoke of her as a philosophic personality far above the common laws of chastity and convention. Next to Peter the Great, she was the most powerful ruler of Russia; and, unlike Peter, she did not stop with introducing merely utilitarian reforms, but extended her spheres of public activity into the realms of literature and art. To her, belonged the credit of raising Russia to a level with Europe intellectually and artistically. In her time and by her example, the Russian nobles attained refinement and began to adopt French ideals and conceptions in their life and thought.

She died in November 1796, in the 67th year of her age.

MY VILLAGE FOLK*

BY K. T. KRISHNASWAMI AYYANGAR M. A.

A **WORLD** within the world is the village. It is a veritable microcosm of life and civilization and holds within its wide embrace diverse castes and creeds, several occupations and interests. The followers of Vishnu, the protector of the world, hold allegiance to the Perumal temple, and the devotees of Siva, the lord of final destiny, to the Iswara temple of the village. Yet the two deities are one; the wise ones know it even among the common folk, saying "Hari and Siva are one, and dust in his mouth who knows it not". Besides these two major Gods, are innumerable minor village deities for the populace. To all these the village looks up for counsel and protection. Their several names bespeak their relations to the people and their benefactions. They are the givers of rain and corn, healers of diseases, averters of pestilence and protectors of cattle and men. They have their rounds of festivals in the proper seasons, when all the village is merged in one mighty fellowship of mirth and devotion.

On the outskirts of the village dwell the lowliest and the last, God's own poor, from whose race sprang Nanda like the lotus from the miry pool. Truly has the poet sung: "Here is thy foodstool and there rest thy feet where live the poorest and lowliest and lost". The Lord Siva himself, it was said, came with his consort and attendants in the manner and shape of these lowly ones to complete the *yaga* of a high-born devotee who prayed for a vision of God's form. The tradition is still renewed every year in a South Indian village of the coming of the Ganga in honour of a brahmin devotee's offer of drink to a thirsty outcast. And, among the Lord's greatest devotees, are not some of the choicest pearls from this community? These are the ancients of the land, whose antique instruments of music are typical of their old race and culture. What slow and silent processions of civilizations do they not quicken into life by their strange sounds and harmonies? The uncanny beats and rhythms of the *tom-toms* have in them still the weird *crescendos* of some funeral or bloody sacrificial orgies of a remote primitive race, while the shrill notes of the winding bugle echo perhaps the rallying yells or war-cries of wild marching hordes under the flare of torches at night. Hence the romance of these instruments when they now sound in the village, calling people to work and to worship, or announcing the perils of flood or fire.

Nearer still are the hamlets of the ordinary professionals of the village, the barber and the *dhoby*, the carpenter and the smith, the potter and the oilman, the toddy-drawer and the shepherd, the trader and the serf. The village is like a clock, wheels within

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* A chapter from *"Sketches of South Indian Life,"* to be published shortly.

wheels inside, all moving and co-operating, pushing on the hand of life on the wonderful dial of time. In the village, no man or trade is mean, however humble or low. Each fulfils his or its *dharma* in the grand economy of God's kingdom.

Samu, the chatty old barber and physician living by the tank, is the first of the brood of village professionals. The *iluppai* tope, where he and his relations thrive, is the news-shop of the village where the tempting wares of gossip and scandal are retailed and sold for consideration other than money. But Samu, with his characteristic salutation, is the envy of many in the village, in respect of his devotion to his own *dharma*. In his advancing age, he turned a *vanaprastha*, going on pilgrimage to Tirupati in the north and to Rameswaram in the south and ending it all with *kambaservai* among his own kith and kin. Though his hand shakes at this time of his age, it has not lost its healing charm. It can still feel the feeble pulse and search out the baffling devil of disease. Samu's good sons are the reputed pipers and drummers whose performances delight the villages in times of festival and marriage.

Close to Samu in space and piety is Mekkan, the dhoby, with his peculiar stoop, the impress of his profession. He is honest, but not now efficient. Hence perhaps the saying, "seek an old barber, but a new dhoby". Mekkan loves his toiling wife dearly, and she loves the donkey that bears all the clothes so patiently. Out of the circuit of their love and work flows the current of village cleanliness. Mekkan supplies ags for torches and clothes for pandal decorations of the temple and the home. He is also the unofficial soothsayer of the villager. On him descends Kali at the annual festival in her honour. The whole village hangs on his lips in awe and silence for the predictions of this terrible guardian of the soil.

Not far from Mekkan does Velan, the potter, ply his humble work in his loin cloth all day long, from morn to dewy eve. With his back arched like that of the elephant, he worships in the Ayyanar temple. Velan makes bricks, barns, pots, lamps, horses and idols. He has his share of village reputation as a doctor for fractures and swellings. For certain skin diseases, his clay smearings or 'writings' are of wondrous efficacy. Though skilful of hand, poor Velu is not exempted from the proverbial stupidity attributed to his race. Yet there was Thirumilakanta, one of the Lord's chosen, in this race of potters. Velan's only rival on this doubtful score is Rama Konan, the shepherd and veterinary surgeon, whose intelligence, people humorously say, rests on his lumpish neck. It was a shepherd, who once went to hear the street *katha* and came home with a different story altogether from the rest. The cowherds and shepherds, whom Raman represents, are a very useful class well-versed in the art of breeding and training cows and bulls. Raman is their headman and he is called in the village by the honorific *konare*.

Velan's neighbours are Kasi Chetty and Kunji Rowthan. Kasi Chetty is the amiable oilman whose brain, one supposes, is as oily as his body and raiment. Daily in the early hours of the morning, he yokes his bulls to the oil-

mill whose creaking and squeaking starts the busy housewives of the village on their daily rounds of labour in their homes. The toiling women in their scolding moods compare themselves to Kasi's bulls, which go round and round, wearily turning the pestle and churning the oil seeds. Kasi Chetty's wife is a clever hand at business, unlike her husband who, when off duty, will stand with vacant looks in wide-mouthed admiration at her clever sales, from a half-spoon to a potful of oil for grain or for money. Kunji Rowthan is the Mohammadan jack-of-all-trades, with his double inheritance of religion and manners. He is half Hindu and half Mohammadan. He is a cultivator, money-lender, broker and wholesale vendor of grains and chillies in their proper seasons. Kunji is the only link in the village with foreign parts across the seas. His son Batcha has gone to Rangoon for trade, in accordance with the saying of Auvvai, the village poetess, "Seek wealth even by traversing the stormy seas". Batcha sends money regularly to his father, and occasionally come mats, shoes, umbrellas and trinkets to their Brahmin landlord. People often point to Kunji as an ideal husbandman of thrift and industry.

Kunji's financial adviser is Samanna, the dreaded village teacher with his big round sandal paste and *kunkumam* marks on the forehead. He is a connoisseur in snuff, and, while the children attribute all his anger to the brown powder in his snuff-box, the older folk look to it as the replenisher of their needy noses. Sometimes he strikes terror into the simple village people by his meticulous white stripes of ash on his arms and body and by the big *rudraksham* garland round his neck. He is a man of many livings, being a bit of an astrologer, doctor, and exorcist, in addition to his occasional duties as a relieving manager of the village choultry, or *pujari* of the little Ganesh temple of the Corner Lane.

Under the spreading banyan tree, toils Shanmugam, the village blacksmith, forging ploughshares, nails, bolts and nuts, and making sickles, knives, spades, crowbars and wheel-rims. His work makes his body charcoal-dark, and he merrily plays the *puchandi* to children in the evening while sitting at his betel. But his colleague, the carpenter yonder, is neither so terrible nor so hard-working. He is Torachami the Unready, well-known among the villages far and near as the maker of fine toys for children and of big wooden elephants and horses for temple festivals. The huge car he designed for the Krishna Temple of yonder town is a marvel of skill and workmanship. He is abreast of the times and makes also wheels and carts of the newest Pondicherry patterns.

All these people meet by chance at the village shop owned by Supparayalu, the village postman, but managed by Ponni, his shrewish wife. Every afternoon, Supparayalu will act for his wife at the stall, strangely enough reading the songs of Tayumanavar and Pattinatar, the minister and the merchant who renounced the world and became wandering mendicants. Supparayalu's good neighbours and friends are Somu and Ponnu Pattan, the rival village goldsmiths, honest only as far as goldsmiths can possibly be. The village dames say —"Though mother's gold, goldsmiths will steal just a little for the nonce." For their profession's sake, perhaps!

But Kovalu or Gopal, the mason, is a clever and honest fellow. He is the architect of the village who knows the *shastras* for his art. He can give you the plan for a house or town without reference to book or paper. They are all in his mind. He it is who put up the *sumai tangi* (burden rest), the stone seats and the water-troughs on the trunk road for charity.

The little palm-leafed hut in the secluded cocoanut tope is the dwelling, place of Muniyan, the toddy drawer, with his bag and belt indispensable for his tree-climbing and toddy-drawing. He is sinewy and dark and agile of body. He climbs up the palm-trees like a monkey. Muniyan's wife, Valli, is the mistress of the toddy-shop, where at sunset the humble village celebrates the mighty armistice of their lives' daily battle for bread. Valli can well control a whole herd of head-turned drunkards with her stout and boisterous tongue. Muniyan and Valli are very useful to the villagers in the rainy season, with the leaf overcoats they supply for a trifling charge. They also make roofs for houses and pandals with palmyra or cocoanut fronds.

But the cocoanut tope has an uncanny reputation of being the rendezvous of village thieves and *komavarthans* or cattle-lifters, who cannot do without toddy, the favourite drink of their gods. These "gentlemen of the shade and minions of the moon" ply their trade, as if by immemorial right and under divine charter. They boast themselves to be the surviving representatives of an ancient and useful art which, they say, was a means of promoting vigilance and courage on the one hand and checking inhuman avarice or aggression on the other. "Even the art of thieving, one should learn and then forget" says the Indian proverb. The village suffers little from these professional thieves and is even proud of the heroics of Osan, their leader. They are a sort of Reserve Police maintained by annual subsidies, on the well-founded political principle, "set a thief to catch a thief." They, at any rate, add to the romance of village life. Akin to this semi-suspicious fraternity, are the few *kuravars,* who live on the barest of the barren tracts away from all other human dwellings. They seem to bear on their foreheads some immemorial curse. They need little of earth's nourishing things or of humanity's tender gifts of love and charity. They thrive, poor wretches, tough and bare like the date or the palm in the desert. The men hunt squirrels and foxes and the women make baskets and mats of bamboo splints or date leaves. They are an idle and savage race, the remnants of an arrested species of very primitive humanity.

All these vagrants are under the surveillance of Kandan, the wily *Talaiyari*, the village beadle. He is the Detective Officer of the village with his big regulation lathi, insignia of his office. He is a scout by day and sentinel by night, watching every vagrant man or beast. Kandan himself is under the control of the *maniyam* or the village munsiff and the *karnam*, his auxiliary, both powerful in the village, one administering civil justice, and the other looking after the land and revenue.

There now passes before the mind's eye a motley band of village farmers and labourers, the tenders of cattle and

tillers of land—Annamalai and his hard-working sons, Avadai and his silent wife, Murugan and his pair of patient bulls, and others of this humble train without number. Because of them, their honesty and their old world virtues, the skies still rain in due season, and because of their industry and care, earth still yields her plenty. They are the guardians of Lakshmi, for they are the producers of real wealth. The gods and goddesses are their god-fathers and god-mothers. Does not Venkatesa, the lord of the seven hills, still carry the wound on his forehead for having helped a pregnant woman by carrying her share of earth on his head? Was not Nanda assisted by Siva's host in digging the tank at Tiruppangur? There is nothing the gods will not do for their devoted children, whoever they may be.

Their comrade in spirit is Unchuvarti Simachar of the Brahmin street, who, like these humble folk, does his God-allotted duties in their turn and time. "Even the sun may fail in his duties, but not this man in his", say the village people. His life may seem a hard rock of routine and tradition, but few know the artesian-like spring of good will and prayer that flows unseen and unheard from his heart, quietly irrigating the collective mind of the village. An early riser can hear him go to the tank before cock-crow, in fair weather or foul, reciting *slokas* or chanting hymns. Everything from the washing of his teeth to his worshipping at the temple is done in a most perfect and charming manner. There is art, poetry and religion in all his life of thought, word and deed. Though poor for himself, he is rich for the village. The renovation of the temple and the stone-paved steps for the village tank are his work. He is never idle. The little garden by the tank and temple is his. He grows *tulasi*, *kusa* grass, flowers and cotton. Between him and his old widowed sister, they manage all the flowers for worship and adornment at the temple. It is a sight to see him, whether sitting on the tank bund in morning or evening meditation, or going in the street with his begging vessel at noon. He is the Open Door to that Inner Land where God Himself is sun and moon, sky and stars. Like Kuchela of old, but with the vision of mansion and riches only in another world than this, Simachar's life moves quietly on in the peace and plenty of the contented heart.

Of all the village folk, the most interesting is Visiam the wise in the *agraharam*, and the most pitiable is Lechumi the desolate in the Sudra quarters. Of Visiam in some other place. Lechumi is the ironical god-child of Lakshmi the Goddess of Fortune. The most pathetic, no, no, the most heroic, though destitute, is this one fumbling along the streets with her stick. It is years since her only surviving son ran away, nobody knows where. With neither husband nor son in her age to lean on, there is no complaining or cursing in her sore heart. With eyes that once saw, daily she looks to the sky—for that is still her temple—and lifts her heart, ever burning with mother's love, to Lord Surya, the Wanderer in the three worlds, and implores him to bring back her strayed one. When she comes along in the streets, the women folk pause in wonder at her resolution and independence, and gladly listen to her prayerful

cry, "The one who planted, will He not also water the plant?" They freely give their mite and earn the blessings of this blind old Lechumi, who sings:

> O Joy that gives joy
> To the ignorant and the learned!
> O Eye that gives sight
> To the blind and the seeing!
> O Boon that blesses
> The able and infirm!
> O Intelligence that illumines
> The foolish and the wise!
> O Justice that deals evenly
> With the good and the bad!
> O Bliss that dances
> Before all the universe!

from the songs of Swami Ramalinga, the renowned Saint of the Tamil Land.

The village is God's own land and the village folk are God's own people. Their life has the elemental simplicity and grandeur of God's Nature. Riches and poverty rest side by side, as life's necessary complements, which set love and service in motion. The seasons in their delightful round bring to the village their varied charms, weaving many a beautiful pattern of Life in the loom of Time. The harvest season in particular is a time of rejoicing for all, the birds of the air and beasts of the field included; for on the threshing floor it is God who measures out unto all. Even the ants come for their share of Earth's plenty, or *svatantram* and return in joy. There is only one other season in the life of the village, when all differences are merged in a sea of freedom and joy. That is the annual temple festival with its crowning Car Day. The huge temple car imprints itself on the mind and heart of the village as the symbol of life in its wondrous variety and complexity. The wooden charioteer at the helm and the four wooden horses leaping under his whip are there, not to make the car run, but to complete the symbolism of life. When the deity rides in the car, the Brahmin and the pariah down below are united in one bond of common devotion and mutual love. "Men may fight and men may wrangle, but I come down in your midst to make you love Me and thus love one another" is the silent whisper in devoted hearts, amidst the moving shouts of men and the rumbling roll of the car, while in the mind of the dreamer rise the strains:

> "Here, to-day, behold the whole universe, movable and immovable standing in one in My body, O Gudakesa, with aught else thou desirest to see.
>
> But verily thou art not able to behold Me with these thine eyes; the divine eye I give unto thee. Behold My sovereign Yoga."

EDITOR'S NOTES.

1. The Uplift of Women.

We publish in this issue a group picture of the first Samantha conference, in which for the first time women of the Nilambur palace have come forward. We publish also a photo of Sreemati Parwathi Nemminimangalam, who was co-opted as a special member in connection with the Nambudiri bill. During the discussion of this bill, the still very back-ward condition of the Nambudiries was deplored, and it was specially pointed out that woman were the worst sufferers. The community was decaying in numerical strength, as a result of the custom which prohibited the marriage within the caste of the junior members of Nambudiri families.

"While the condition of the junior members was pitiable, the women were the worst sufferers. The last relic of savage slavery was found in a comfortless Nambudiri *Illam* (family). The Nambudiri *Antharajanams* (women) were really more depressed than the Pulayas and Parayas. They had no voice in matters relating to their marriages, and it was not an unusual thing for a girl in her teens to be given in marriage to a decrepit old man of 70, to be his third or fourth wife. Marriage was merely a commercial transaction, and love was not a factor that counted. The rule that only the eldest male member should marry within the community has resulted in countless miseries for young women, who lived in a 'veritable hell' either yoked to decrepit husbands, or doomed to be life-long spinsters. There was no salvation for the community unless, and until, caste marriages for junior members were legalised, and polygamy was prevented. Parents now dreaded the birth of a girl, as marriage was such a very difficult problem to solve. Girls were neglected from their very birth and were not even fed, or cared for, properly, as they were only destined for service as drudges in some one's kitchen for life."

Such matters as the above are apt to be very very depressing. In spite of our modern-day demand for equality with men in everything, one cannot disguise the sad fact that our women are not yet quite fit for that equality. But this does not mean that our women will always be unfit. Were there not great women among them before? Was there not unfitness in other parts of the world among women, and had it not to be fought against and removed? And can it not be so removed among us? Besides, some of the unfitness is due, not to the inability on the part of women to become so fit, but to the standards of fitness impressed on them. It cannot be denied that many of the latter are Western, stamped uncouthly upon an Eastern surface. Itis up to every Indian to unite together in finding a correct ideal.

Time and again have the needs of Indian women been written upon; and it is not at all necessary here to enumerate them or enlarge upon them. Let us just touch on a few factors. First and foremost among such is, we think, co-education between the two

A NEW LADY M. L. C.

CONNEMARA ... 16 JUN 1932 MADRAS

Srimathi Nemminimangalam, a Nambudiri lady, who has been appointed as a Special Member of the Cochin Legislative Council to help the council when the Nambudiri Bill is discussed.

Photo :— Indian News Agency, Srirangam.

THE CALIPH OF BAGDAD

Drama enacted at the Vani Vilas Concert organised by Miss Lazarus in connection with the All-India Educational Conference recently held at Bangalore.

Photo :— Indian News Agency, Srirangam.

18 JUN 1932

sexes from child-hood upwards, with a special curriculum attached after a certain standard for women, in home and vocational training. Physical training should be a necessary feature, as well as moral and religious instruction for boys and girls. At the same time, compulsory education up to the primary standard at least should be insisted upon, and proper inspection and direction of such should be thought very necessary. Not only should the standard of teaching be raised, but also the selection of teachers should be fixed on a higher level than at present. After the primary standard, steps should be taken for an efficient *home* educative system, so that culture can be imparted to *Purdah* women as well. And in this connection, we cannot help touching upon Muslim women. A prominent lady among them has recently said: "The Hindu women have availed themselves of modern education and started on the road to progress. It is a historical fact that Muslim women in early days were well versed in Islamic history and theology. But the present-day Muslims had neglected the holiest precept of their Holy prophet, consigned their women-folk to ignorance and the back-ground, and have thus damaged their national life. Can ignorant Muslim mothers bring up their children in comformity with the divine doctrines and in accordance with the needs of our national life ? It was, therefore, highly incumbent upon all Muslims to awaken themselves to the requirements of national life, and to arrange for the education of future Muslim mothers."

When the minds and bodies of women are trained, their social influence is bound to be of use; but even there, training is necessary. Social reform in recognised matters such as child-marriage, the abolition of dowries, the taking-away of purdah, and widow re-marriage must be thought upon and worked for. Then, there is the removal of untouchability, in which cause no one can work so well as women. It was interesting that this subject formed one of the matters touched upon at the sixth All-India Women's conference. To quote from a speaker there, "To treat a person as an untouchable was a crime against humanity. There was need for systamatic and organised exertion in this direction if they were to succeed. Swaraj would be a delusion so long as any single person in the land was treated as an untouchable. A spirit of patronising would not do anything and the women delegates present should do their utmost to preach and practice the removal of untouchability."

Then again, union among Indian women is very necessary. In this connection, I would like to mention an activity of the co-operative movement. As the Indian Social Reformer said:—

"The new system must be one of common labour for the service of all and the welfare of all. Production must be planned and carried on to satisfy the needs of man kind. All must have equal rights and equal duties and none be able to live at the expense of others.

" Such a system exists to-day in the co-operative movement, whose members unite to open shops which they own in common; they buy their goods for themselves, finance their own undertakings by their small share-holdings, and when they have an organised demand buil

up their productive undertakings, so that what is produced is always of an amount and kind that their members can consume. At the end of the year, the house-wives receive back a greater part of the profit or surplus, which their purchases have created, and what is left still belongs to them, still remains the common property of the Co-operative community.

"I urge all house-wives to help themselves by uniting with the men and women of their land, as members of Co-operative societies throughout the world, who control their own resources, and are moulding that new system which is already giving reality to the old, saying 'Each for all and all for each'. Help to build up this movement, to develop it, take your places in its counsels, in its work for construction, and you will be doing a worthy service to your children. Out of the insecurity of today build up a world of security and peace."

It may not be out of place here to mention the necessity there is for encouraging and supporting indigenous industries. As Mrs. Hussain said at the Women's Conference:—

"A thing towards which I should like to draw the attention of my sisters, is the support of our local industries. India is the poorest country in the whole world, and the world-wide economic depression of the last two years has almost ruined our cultivators and artizans".

The advance of women in industry, and the emancipation of working women are other crying needs in India. In this connection, one would like to quote what Lenin said about the position of women in the Soviet Government and their skill in production. He said:—

"This problem was set on the boards in 1931 with special acuteness, in connection with the mass attraction of women into industry. The People's Commissariat of Labour was directed to determine in what branches of industry female skilled labour could be utilized. And in this, horizons for woman were opened, of which she would not even have dared to dream in pre-revolutionary Russia. Woman has secured access to the crafts of electric repair-man, electrician, engineer in mining, engraver turner and a number of other specialities in the metal industry, highly-skilled crafts in the chemical, textile and food industries.

"The advancement of women to responsible work in industry is extremely important. The working woman receives the job of master-workman, of assistant-director, director. The working woman has fully justified the hopes set on her by the Soviet government. She is not only becoming a skilled worker in industry, but is beginning to play a leading part in our socialist construction.

"The attraction of women into active, creative work has radically changed their psychology. While in Tsarist Russia the woman-worker regarded it as her great good fortune to do house-work and not to go to work in the lawful factory, which ruined her life, now she sees the fundamental meaning of life in productive, socially-useful work. She is struggling determinedly for community-housing, nurseries, kindergartens, public dining-rooms, public laundries, for new conditions of life, which set woman free from houshold, unproductive labour."

Care must be taken, however, to avoid antagonism between men and

women as much as possible, and such a vision shunned, as was inferred lately by an Indian paper from the speech of an Indian lady, a vision "in which women will form the intellectual class, while men drudge in offices to provide money for running the home." We do not want "man, after completing his ordinary education, to settle down as the financing agency and woman to pursue higher studies and devote herself to art and literature." Such a system will be worse than the present one.

We want equality as much as possible.

2. Franchise for Indian Women.

In these strenuous times, when all over India, the basis for the discussion of all-important questions is the group or corporate body, individual cries raised here and there in assent or dissent of propositions advanced will not be of much avail. Yet, are not individuals the units of association? And is it not true that "every mickle makes a muckle"?

The problem of the Franchise is one of the most all-important questions of the day; and it stands to reason that we women "on the basis of our admitted and declared equality on all matters relating to franchise, representation or employment", can claim as much right to vote as men. And yet, conditions being as they are, it cannot but be that women will be placed at a much greater disadvantage than men in most of the qualifications supplied for franchise. It remains for Indians therefore, men as well as women, to find some system by which equality can be formed and maintained. Property-holding, even when nominal, will make the right of voting unavailable for many women in India. It was suggested, therefore, that the wives and widows of men entitled to vote under the property qualification should also be enfranchised. It is argued that such a system will be the right one for several reasons, one being that most of the adult women in India are married; another that very few married women hold property or pay taxes in their own name and therefore that it will be impossible otherwise to adjust the level between men and women voters. Yet a third reason is advanced that, since the majority of women in India are illiterate and uneducated and therefore probably not able to understand the responsibility of voting at all, it is easier for wives to get their tuition in this matter from their husbands than from other people.

But, it may be urged, will men really take the trouble to teach their wives? The answer will be that very few of them will do it, if we judge by the existing standard of the comparative indifference of the ordinary Indian to his women. Then again, is it not likely that a man will influence his wife, unconsiously it may be, to vote in the same way that he does? If she is illiterate enough to want teaching from him on the subject, it stands to reason that she will be inexperienced enough not to be able to decide for herself. Moreover, wives and widows have less time at their disposal, immersed as they are in domestic matters, than unattached women. What again of the claim of the different wives of one man? Why should the senior wife alone have the right to vote? And why by such admissions should polygamy be encouraged? What

about the deserted or divorced wife? Again, are there not unmarried women in India, and is their number not likely to increase in modern days, owing to the economic troubles of the country, and owing also to the fact that women are understanding more and more that marriage is not the end and aim of their lives? No doubt, the standard of literacy suggested will include the best of unmarried women; but then all unmarried women need not be literate.

For this very reason, is it right to base the citizenship of women on their relationship as consorts of men? Is this not absolutely contrary to our proud claim for equality as independent of any question of sex? I think it is, and graduates, who claim to have some education at least, should stringently oppose this system altogether, as absolutely unworthy of their standards. The committee of 1931-32 of the Madras Women Graduates' Union advances that "an enfranchisement of married women is a recognition of the family unit as the basis of natural life, and of the equal partnership of men and women in that unit". This may be so; but the committee has evidently forgotton that there are other units in a family than that of mere husband and wife, and that equality of representation should not mean equality of partnership of husband and wife alone. As we have often said, domestic responsibilities should be the first dutyof woman; but that does not mean that all claims should be based on such alone.

Therefore, we agree with the All-India Women's conference, and with the Women's Associations of Bombay, Madras, the U. P., and other parts of India, when they lay down "that a woman should be a citizen by her own right and her rights of citizenship should not be based on an extraneous qualification like marriage". And this can best be gained by the principle of adult franchise.

The suggestion that there should be a literacy test does not find favour in the eyes of many people, as then women will be placed at a greater disadvantage than men. But then, it should be recognised that, if women are so placed, it is up to them to remedy the situation by seeing that such a disadvantage is lessened by increased education and therefore by the raising of their standard of literacy. We think that, if a limit is thought necessary to the number of electorate forces, it should be not that of property or tax-paying, but of a certain standard of literacy. The higher education test is, of course, impossible. Some people have suggested the primary standard. In that case, education to that standard must be made compulsory for women. Some others have suggested the test of being able to read or write a page in any language. This seems to be quite a good standard; but then it is also said that education can be judged by other tests than these; that culture may be through other ways, viz, the eye and the ear; and that school standards can never really estimate an individual's intelligence or efficiency. This is certainly true; but then it also stands to reason that in these modern days every man and woman worth his or her name, thinks it necesscry to read and write something. In any case, some sort of education should be the test, be it reading, writing, or power of understanding

I would suggest centres of teaching on public matters for illiterate people, men and women, all over villages and towns. And the final standard should be ability to be able to understand and interpret. But this should not deteriorate merely into an examination test. The evil is that such are so apt to deteriorate in these days of utilitarianism and mechanical standardisation. But, if this can be avoided by a kindlier system of question, answer and testing, great results can be achieved. There is no doubt that many of our poorest and most illiterate women are keenly interested in such things, as can be gauged at once by an informal talk with them. They are very enthusiastic about all such matters; and it is up to us, educated women, to divert this interest into the correct channel. What wonders may not be achieved if this is done? Then alone can the adult suffrage which we want now, be the correct and ideal one. Then alone can we, women of India, proudly and worthily claim and carry out the demand for equality, which we are now advancing, rightly it is true, but somewhat impracticably.

"THE TONE OF VOICE"

It is not so much what you say,
As the manner in which you say it;
It is not so much the language you see,
As the tone in which you convey it.
"Come here!" I sharply said,
And the baby cowered, and wept.
"Come here" I cooed, and she looked and smiled,
And straight to my lap she crept.

Whether you know it or not, whether you mean or care,
Tenderness, kindness, love and truth, envy and anger are there.
So if you would quarrels avoid, and in peace and love rejoice,
Keep anger not only out of your words,
But keep it out of your voice.

M. E. H.
From the *Treasure Chest*.

THE MADRAS SEVA SADAN

BY PADMINI SATTHIANADHAN

I SPENT a pleasant hour, one afternoon, visiting the Madras Seva Sadan. The building is situated in a large compound, with specious playgrounds, shadowed by beautiful trees, where the students can lead a healthy open-air life. The first sight that greeted me was a number of girls and young women playing out-of doors, and the first inpression I received was that the Seva Sadan was an ideal and happy institution. To quote some words from the Report of the Madras Seva Sadan, the Institution "is a direct living response to a most poignantly urgent demand peculiar to modern India, the demand of young women seeking an individual independent life, for education and cultural advancement, impelled by the urge of self-expression. It is a response which is steady, efficient and certain, because it is organised and systematised".

The Seva Sadan is not only for well-to-do girls, but for "despairing young women" as well, such as poor widows, orphans and deserted wives. The school does not satisfy itself by giving mere education, like that imparted in other standard schools; for, besides a general and literary education, it teaches the girls lace work, needle-work, sewing, cutting, weaving, embroidery, *jigna* and rattan work, so that a woman, on leaving the premises after her five years' course, is fitted to earn her own livelihood, either by teaching, or setting up her own business in any of these useful handicrafts. There is no doubt that there is a great need in India for our women to be trained more in industries. Mere attainment of degrees is not going to help our country very much in the future. It is training in vocational fields, such as useful trades, that will be of most use and most paying to those who wish to earn their own living. The Seva Sadan, therefore, is doing a great work in providing scope for Indian women to learn a useful occupation. Those girls, who do not wish to take up a trade are trained to become nurses, mid-wives or teachers after studying up to the Fourth form.

The Madras Seva Sadan consists of a large main building, and five little cottages, where the students hope soon to reside. Donations for other cottages have been promised. The scheme is to use the cottages as hostels, each holding 12 to 15 girls, and to arrange that everyone of them should be the house-keeper of her cottage in turn, so that she may be trained in home-making, and be fully equipped to manage her own establishment in later life.

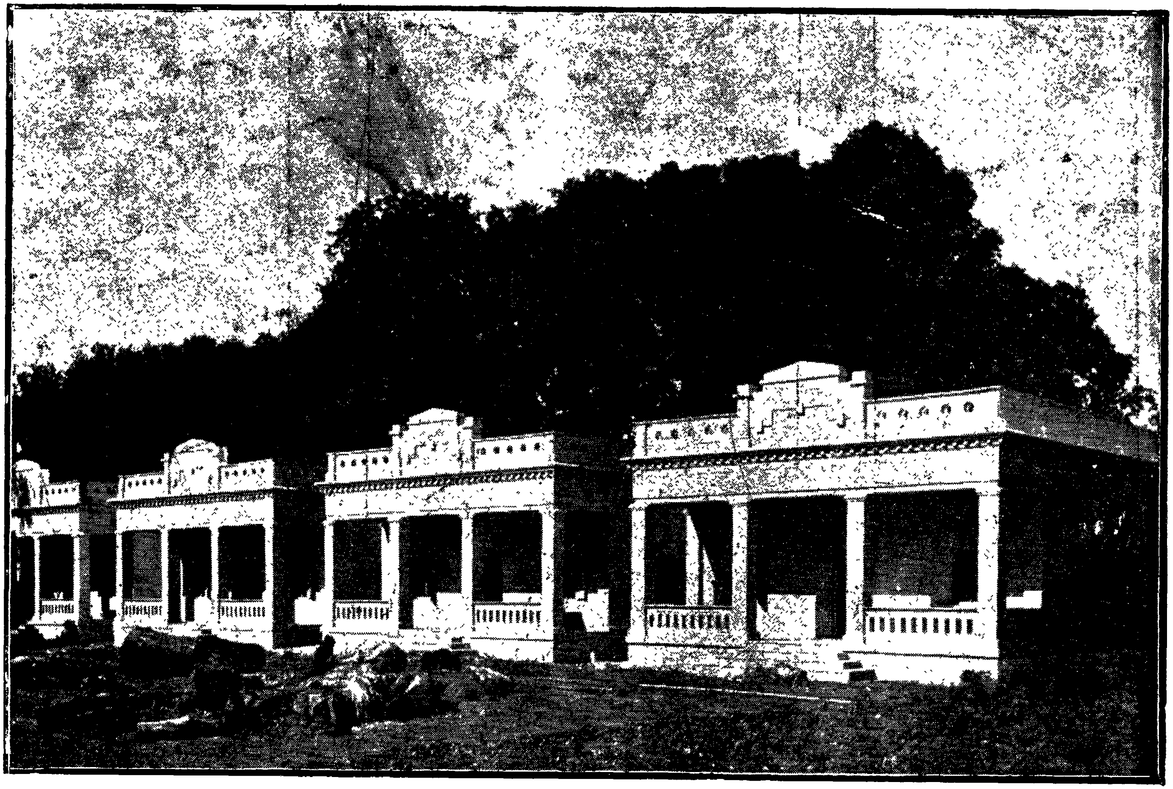
The school is divided into two groups, Literary and Industrial. In the former, students are taught to the end of the fourth form in English, and up to the eighth standard in Telugu and Tamil. Permission to open the V & VI forms has already been securod. Those taking up any form of industry only study up to a certain section on the literary side.

THE MADRAS SEVA SADAN.

RATTAN CLASS.

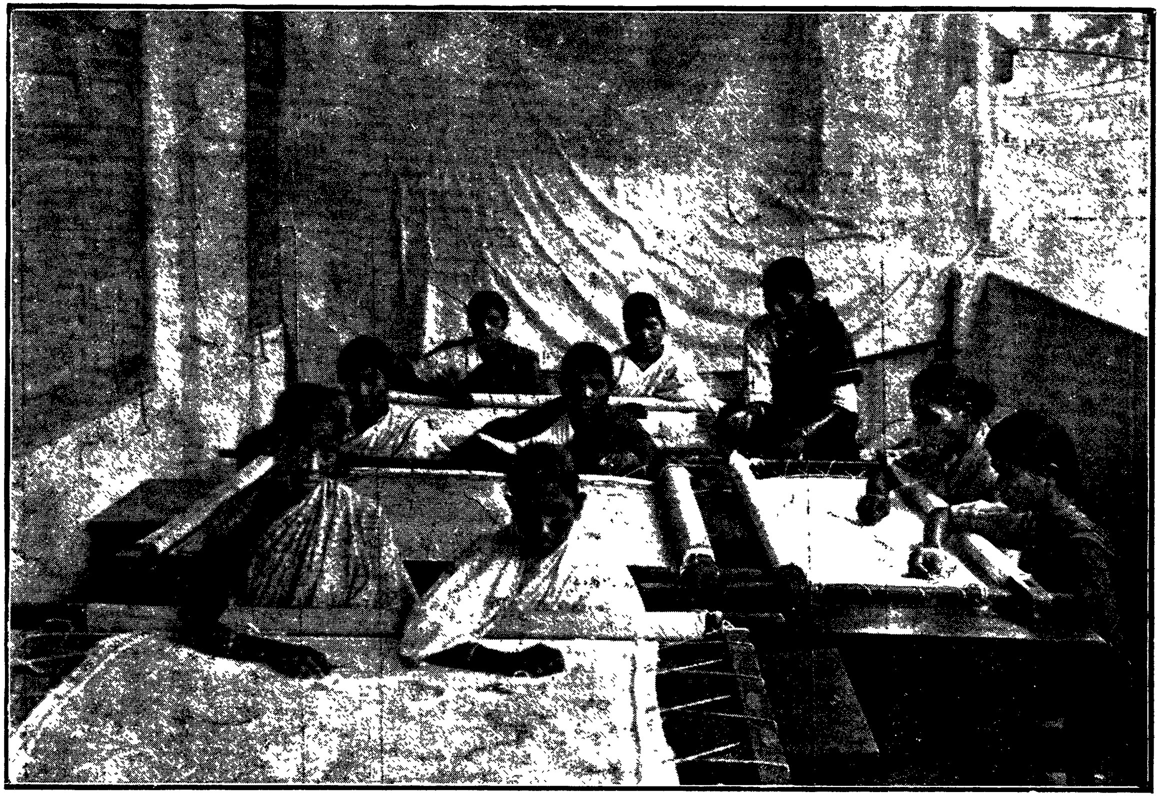
18 JUN 1932

THE MADRAS SEVA SADAN.



A view of four of the New Buildings constructed in the grounds.

THE MADRAS SEVA SADAN.



Embroidery Class.

16 JUN 1932

THREE LADY PIONEERS IN MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS.

Mrs. Cherian Jacob,

Secretary of the Coimbatore Ladies' club, the first Syrian Christian lady to be elected as a Councillor of the Coimbatore Municipality. She is the Secretary of the Dt. Girl Guides' Association.

Shrimati Subhadra Kumari Chowhan,

The first lady Councillor to be elected to the Jubbulpore Municipality. She is a well-known poet of Hindi literature.

Mrs. Gulbai Muluk Irani,

The first lady to be elected as a Member of the Kirkee Contonment Board.

Photos:—*Indian News Agency, Srirangam.*

There is a show-case in which the handiwork done by pupils is exhibited and put up for sale.

The institution is under the able management of Mrs. Venkata Subba Rao, who is the Honorary General Secretary and Treasurer. There is a regular paid staff, and the school is recognised by Government. The success of the Seva Sadan can be gauged by the rapid increase in its pupils. Three years ago there were only seven. Today there are 102, besides 70 day-scholars. 37 women have found situations after leaving the school.

From the above short account, it will be seen that the Madras Seva Sadan is indeed an ideal institution. It caters for every class and kind of women, and provides a wide and useful education. Above all, its cosmopolitan hostel life teaches our girls to appreciate all castes and creeds without any difference. Let us hope that other towns in India will follow the noble example of Madras and set up such schools to help their women, and raise the standard of education in this country.

MY HOMESTEAD.

Ah ! Thee I love, my peaceful Home
    Where one content ne'er dreams to roam ;
Where morn to e'en the glorious sun,
    Streams down until his day is done.
Thy calmness gives me strange delight,
    Thy beauty is a pleasing sight ...
Oh ! Happy Homestead be my nest
    Till Heaven calls me there to rest !

LELAND J. BERRY,

THOUGHTS ON IDEAL WOMANHOOD.

BY H. KAVERI BAI

MRS. Tampoe's interesting pen picture of the ideal woman comes like a refreshing draught in an age, when one is sick of modern women and their fantastic doings, even though the latter are partly the effect of the same electric atmosphere which has quickened the blood of every mortal in bondage, to struggle for freedom or to die.

Woman is up, fighting for her rights, tooth and claw. But, in the violence of the reaction, she has forgotten that she is woman still, for all the freedom that she may win, and that she is meant to be "a thing of beauty and a joy for ever." And nothing but the sweet dignity of a good character can be preserved for a whole life-time, without the chemist's aid. The honest advisor, therefore, on the matter of beauty hints does not recommend face creams and lip-sticks, but a genial temperament and a healthy mind in a healthy body. The mind has no real health when licence is mistaken for liberty, and excesses are committed.

Every newspaper and journal, however obscure, treats the public with sheets of portraits of "prominent women," till one wonders where fame will manage to accomodate them all conspicuously. The range of activities, which confer prominence on a woman, covers too wide a prospect to allow a wise discrimination. But a woman can always count upon the loyal support of press and camera-men to make a heroine of her, if she only steps out of her limits.

A modern woman is often, not the gentle, chaste wife and loving mother, who makes the home a paradise for her family—a woman whose strength of character makes even the most inhuman tyrant of a husband a much better man. Naturally, therefore, consolation is sought abroad, and the home is ruined, and when homes break up, the nation, nay society, is on the quicksands.

But is she happy, the woman, who moves in a giddy whirl of hectic pleasure? Her powders and paints and lip-sticks, her dresses and no-dresses, her *casinos* and night-clubs, do these make her really happy? I doubt it, because for such people the most ecstatic thrill and sensation ends in dull satiety. Life will become prosaic soon for them. And they know that, though men by hundreds may be helpless toys in their hands while youth and beauty last, yet once middle age sets in, and surface attractions begin to fade, no amount of artificial make-up can save them.

And yet, such women must needs snigger at Victorian dames, whose modesty was their enduring charm, and whose up-bringing taught them to be an example to their children, and real helpmates to their husbands. A ship

drifting away on every current might as well laugh at the vessel secure in her moorings.

Victoria the Good, herself remains to this day the same beloved lady that she was in life, and a most honoured sovereign for all time; while Elizabeth the virgin Queen in all her glory, is occasionally sneered at. Mary Queen of Scots, the beauteous royal heroine of the most tragic romance in British history, is generally spoken of as having had as many husbands as Henry VIII had wives.

What then can make the modern woman realise the dangers of the seething maelstrom of destruction, towards which she is madly carreering, dragging along with her the debris of beautiful and holy social institutions? The saving power is a little place for God in every woman's heart, not a dogma, not a creed, nor even church-going, but an intimate and personal touch with the Holiest, which alone reveals the ugly contrast between the pure and the filthy. The home, the nation and the earth itself, will be a happy spot, instead of a mere barren desert bearing only Dead Sea fruit, when woman distinguishes freedom from licence, and will even suffer to right a wrong, rather than commit another wrong in vindictive fury. The world needs more and more such women in these days of civilised savagery and refined barbarism. Like angels, however, such women do not come within the range of press and camera men for an ephemeral fame.

'TO KNOW ALL IS TO FORGIVE ALL'

If I knew you and you knew me—
If both of us could clearly see,
And with an inner sight divine
The meaning of your heart and mine,
I'm sure that we would differ less
And clasp our hands in friendliness;
Our thoughts would pleasantly agree
If I knew you and you knew me.

If I knew you and you knew me,
As each one knows his own self, we
Could look each other in the face
And see therein a truer grace.
Life has so many hidden woes,
So many thorns for every rose;
The 'why' of things our hearts would see,
If I knew you and you knew me,

(From the *Treasure Chest*).

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE BABY

AN ATTEMPT TO EXPRESS THE WESTERN WOMAN'S VIEW

THE article on the Philosophy of the Baby which appeared in the December issue of the *Indian Ladies' Magazine* interested me very much, and I should like to express an opinion on some of the points raised.

Let us take first the criticism of the Western method of keeping separate rooms for children. Actually, this habit is only adopted by comparatively well-to-do people. Amongst the poor and middle class people of England at any rate, children live along with their parents and are tended by them, except at school time. In any case, a modern nursery is hardly to be compared with a Hospital isolation ward. It is on the contrary a delightful baby-palace. If parents can set aside a part of their house solely for the use of their children, is it not perferable that the little ones should live in a place which is planned entirely for them? In a nursery, there will be pictures from their favorite story books around the walls, tiny chairs and tables for toddlers and lovely toys, appropriate books and games for older children, in fact everything that people who have studied the question deeply can think of for their happiness. Giving children free access to any part of the house, of itself, imposes restrictions. The little ones cannot always play their games just where they fancy; the conversation and actions of the grown-ups must necessarily suffer some restriction; when there are visitors the children are kissed, questioned and teased until they are bewildered, even while those same visitors may be wishing for a quiet chat with the parents.

How the poor modern mother is condemned because she employs others to look after her children! We must however consider more than one aspect of the case. A woman who has built up, by strenuous years of education and hard work a certain place for herself in the world, may consider it foolish for her to cut herself away from her activities, in order to attend to every tiny want of her children, which duty can be performed quite satisfactorily by an efficient nurse. At the same time, it is unjust to say that such a woman has no interest in her children or does not love them. It certainly means that they do not have the perpetual companionship of their parents, but then it is not an irrefutable axiom that the perpetual companionship of its parents is necessary or desirable for a child.

It may be an excellent principle to instil into the young mind "the noble virtues of filial affection and self-sacrifice," but our children are not taught to regard their parents as deities, and it may be noted here that our conception of loving one's parents is not synonymous with absolute and implicit obedience—when past childhood at any rate; we consider that no human being has the right to expect or accept implicit and unquestioning obedience, and constant sacrifices from another grown person, simply on the score of parentage.

I do not think that "motherhood is now looked upon by woman as a curse and a veritable burden." The women of 1932 love their children, just as much as did their great-grandmothers, but they are more enlightened on the matter and they will not have children until they are prepared to accept the undeniable responsibility which parenthood brings. The standard of living is becoming higher and wise parents have children only when they are able to look after and educate them, and as far as lies in their power, produce a healthy and useful addition to the population of their country. In England, the day is rapidly passing when girls, little more than children themselves, bore numerous children for their husbands and masters, without questioning. Woman is not a human incubator, but a reasonable and reasoning member of Society.

Finally, it is worthy of notice that, although the birth-rate is decreasing, there is also a remarkable decrease in the infant mortality rate, which would seem to indicate that our babies are fewer and sturdier.

An English-woman.

A LIGHTER ASPECT OF ECONOMICS

BY MALCOLM ADISESHIAH

I have received, what I should call a tall order from the Editor. Now, if the latter were kindly disposed towards me, she might have asked me to write a story or a criticism, on some article or event, or at least on some one of the great economic problems of the day. And, had I been asked to send in an article on any one of these subjects, I am sure I could have made up ten, twenty, or even thirty columns without taxing myself.

Not for me the primrose path of dalliance, however. I am requisitioned to contribute "something on the lighter side of economics." Put boldly, I am treated, not as a contributor, but as a clown.

What an idea! To associate economics and economists with anything light! An Economist provokes, not laughter, but tears. He is more a subject for Aeschylus than for Aristophanes.

When I last met the Editor, I was told that Economists, too, may smile sometime. I agree—they may—but they don't. And methinks, they can't. An Economist frowns and scowls, that is the correct etiquette. It is the procedure, whereby you and I are kept at arm's length.

However, I once nearly made an Economist smile—and its very recollection sends a shiver down my spine. It was *a-man-may-smile-and smile-and-smile and be a type.* Were I to allude to that style of smile, the Editor is hardly likely to be pleased, for I am sure the contributors and subscribers of the Magazine include many eminent economists, both here and abroad.

Time was when I believed that an Economist, too, could smile. But I was in those days, a green raw youth, with little experience and less judgment, and no understanding of human nature. In weekly reviews, appearing in local papers, of the money market, whatever it may mean and wherever it may exist, I was repeatedly told that credits were in plentiful supply ; that there were more lenders than borrowers ; that it was difficult to put out funds at anything like a fair rate ; that, in short, as the reviews used to say somewhat graphically, money was going a-begging. And I said to myself : " Here is something great, a chance of profit to others and a great opportunity for me. This money shan't go a-begging. Let me do something."

So resolving, and prompt to act on the resolve, I betook myself to an eminent economist, who was the Managing Director of a bank, which, I presumed from a study of its full-line-length figures, would be suffering most of all from this redundancy of cash. As regards borrowing from banks, I had decided on two definite principles. Firstly, on the authority of Stephen Leacock, I surmised that it was easier to borrow in six or seven figures than in hundreds. You must think big, act big, and that was the only way you could succeed as a professional bororwer. Secondly, you should not take loans on pro-notes, as they are repayable on demand; nor on *hundis*,, as they become due on dates of maturity; but as *call-money;* for, as a financial paper once defined it, call-money is what you can call your own. And, putting these two-fold doctrines together, I thought it would not be after all a bad thing, if I could call, say, a seven-figure amount " my own. " Altogether I felt greatly elated, as I sent my card in to the great economist.

"Good morning," I started cheerily.

"Good morning. Yes, Sir, what can I do for you?" asked my friend, the Economist.

It was at this stage that I thought that nothing would be so good as a facetious remark or two at the start, something that would make the great man smile and expand and grow convivial and say *yes* to future proposals.

"I don't know if you can do anything for me," I commenced. "I have come to do something for you. It is a shame that so great, so puissant and so enlightened, an Economist as you, directing or managing a bank, should be turned into a beggar, literally hawking about your money, unable to lend or sell it. Believe me, I was pained, deeply grieved to hear of your sad plight, and I have made up my mind to do you a good turn. And, if I may quote your own words, let me ask, what can I do for you?"

The great Economist did not smile. Far from it, he almost frowned.

"Look here, Sir," he replied, "I don't exactly understand the import of your words. May I ask you to make

yourself clearer, and as brief as possible. Day after tomorrow is Mail day, and I am busy."

"Tell me, are not credits in plentiful supply?" I asked in a language, which a child could understand.

"Yes, they are," came the answer.

"Are you not experiencing great difficulty in placing funds?"

"Yes."

"Is not money going a begging?"

"Yes." This was in a raw, even rasping, tone.

"And finally, are there not more lenders than borrowers?"

"Yes—but what have you got to do with that?"

"My proposal is simple; you can thin the bulging list of lenders by one, and augment the emancipated list of borrowers by one. In plain terms I am willing to borrow 10 lakhs from your bank. Let me state that I am not one of those, who do small things in a small way. Ten lakhs or nothing."

And, waving my hand so as to prevent his interrupting me, which he started doing, I continued: "And I won't borrow on pronotes or hundis, as they are repayable, I am for call-money, money which I can call my own and which you could get rid of once and for all, so that you need not have to go a-begging over again. And so, let me ask, will you let me have 10 lakhs as a *call loan*?"

The eminent Economist grew purple in the face, was too indignant for words and could only ring the bell hysterically. And, when the peon appeared, he pointed a trembling finger in the direction of the door.

I took the hint, and, as I came out! I laughed to myself: "What a joke! And yet no Economist can see a joke."

The lighter Aspects of Economics! Psha! Economists too may smile! Psha!

POETRY PAGES.

(1). THE SPELL OF THE FOREST.

BY PADMINI SATTHIANADHAN.

There is a stillness in a forest glade
That cannot be explained. How silently
The sun plays hide and seek with the [mottled shade!
How hushed and quiet the merry birds [can be!
What mystic power is it that keeps the [heart
Of the jungle so exclusively apart
From the noisy world outside? What [sacred law
Is it that fills the wild with an uncanny [awe?

So still is all the earth that e'en the fall
Of a dry twig strangely startles us. The [breeze
Seems afraid to touch the leaves. The [call

Of a peacock echoing through the silent [trees
Sounds like a wailing spirit, and the [crash
Of a hunted *Sambur*, as we see it flash
Through the bamboo, makes us realise
That watching us are a thousand hidden [eyes.

And still, there is a charm, a wondrous [joy,
To be awhile away from living things,
To hide in the depths of a forest and [enjoy
A solace that no human contact brings,
To mingle with the wildness all around,
To think and dream in loneliness pro- [found,
To feel great Nature's power, and there [to dwell
Soothed by her magic touch, her mystic [spell.

(2) WOMEN AND FLOWERS.

BY H. KAVERI BAI.

An angel wandered in a garden fair,
Amidst the beds af blossoms, rich and [rare;
His fingers held a lovely crystal urn,
To gather musk from scented blooms [that morn;
As o'er each flower he bent,
To breathe its fragrant store,
Their loveliness grew more,
With grace his presence lent;
But not from all he gleaned the incense [sweet,
To lay the phial at his Master's feet.

He gazed in sorrow on the gay expanse
Of brightest blossoms in the zephyrs' [dance;
Their silken-leaved and golden-tasselled [sea
Waved its gossamer petals merrily:
"But ah, how sad," he cried,
"Amongst the fairest fair,
How scant the blooms and rare
Where odours sweet abide."
And as the angel homeward floated by,
The flowers watched the vision with a [sigh.

Some say, the earth has other blossoms [too,
Like those in garden bowers, as fair to view;
In hut and cottage, manse and palace grand,
These flowers bloom and gladden every [land.
Women we call their name,
Fair faces, lovely forms,
The lotus in their charms,
The lily's slender frame;
The fragrant breath on them is chastity,
More precious than the gifts of Nature [free.

Hence, woman, guard your glory from [sin's blight,
Hold fast to virtue, cling with all your [might;
Your grand achievements and your [treasured dowers,
Your beauty's praise, may be like scent- [less flowers.
Your millions may be gone,
And yet perhaps regained,
But, once your Nature's stained,
It is for ever done.
God wants the incense of your purity,
The world by your sweet life shall [better be.

TOPICS OF INTEREST.

BY LELAND. J. BERRY.

(1). AMONG THE NEW BOOKS.

The Mystics of Siena, by Piere Misciattelli Cambridge; W. Heffer and Sons, Ltd., 10s. 6d.

This interesting work was first published in 1929, and has been translated from the Italian of Piero Misciattelli by M. Peters-Roberts. In no other Italian city between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries was Art so closely bound to life as it was in Siena. Mysticism was freely abundant, and was of a religious and civil ideal of the people, rather than just for the monopoly of wealthy and powerful nobles. The plates that illustrate the text are admirable, particularly the one facing page 49. "Frescoes In Leccecto, by Paola Di Neri, 14th century, Scenes of War and the Chase". This book is intended for the use of those who wish to acquire more knowledge of primitive painters and sculptors, and of the religious thought of these days. Truly one of the finest books of its type I have read.

Shakespeare and that Crush, by Richard Dark, Oxford; Basil Blackwell, 4s. 6d. Those of you, who love old classic masters and are broad-minded, will enjoy the playful humour of this little volume, whilst Thomas Derrick's drawings which occur on every page are brilliant satire; his portrayal of Shakespheare tapping out his work on a modern typewriter, Henry the Eighth's legs, great men writing poetry, and the Clansmen of Caledonia, to name but a few, are a perfect riot. Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, Pope, Addison, Steele. John Bunyan, Pepys, Swift, Wordsworth, Gray, Johnson, Burns, Goldsmith, and R. L. Stevenson, all come in turn under Richard Dark's playful survey. A book of rich, but not over-ripe, fun which I read through twice, in case I had missed anything.

The life of Zamenhof by Edmond Privat, London; George Allen and Unwin, 4s 6d. Dr Zamenhof, was the inventor of that wonderful new world-language Esperanto. This is a remarkable book, for it is the true biography of a remarkable man. Born in Lithuania, of Jewish parents, on the 15th of December 1859, Ludovic Zamenhof was reared amidst great trouble and suffering. Four races formed the population of Lithuania, four races of differing creeds and languages, a state of affairs that bred distrust, suspicion, insult, persecution and hate on every side. Immediately he was old enough to reason for himself, young Zamenhof saw that the language bar was the chief trouble, for were not all these men possessed of the same ideals, only with different mediums of expressing them? The older he grew, the more he became obsessed with the idea that there must be one universal tongue that the whole world can understand, and thus, after trials that this book details with beautiful sympathy, the new language, Esperanto, was born. Today Esperanto is spoken and written in all countries of the world; there are even books and

periodicals published entirely in Esperanto. This language that Zamenhof invented is just as foreign on first sight, as any other strange tongue, but it is simple to learn and digest and still simpler to speak and write. Edmond Privat has done his work well; the beautiful self-sacrificing character of Dr. Zamenhof is made clear to us, and we respect him as much for this as for his marvellous genius in inventing a world-language.

Indian Fairy Stories, by Donald Mackenzie, (Glasgow and Bombay, Blackie & Son, 5 sh.).

India is rich in folk-lore, bound so closely in fact with it that it is intertwined around its earliest traditions. This book contains twenty-three beautiful legends and eight magnificent drawings, by Maxwell Armfield. Throughout the book, there is a tendency to moralize, but I think this applies to most legends, whatever their origin, for the horrible fates accorded to some of the monsters and bad men are a strong argument in favour of the Princess or the handsome and good Prince.Of these delightful tales I liked the story of the Star Maidens most (pp124). But "The Wise Ape" (pp115) and "A Greedy Heron" (pp102) contain two good morals. The book is altogether a beautiful production, and there is not a dull tale to be found in its pages.

(2). SONGS OF THE SEA.

Come all ye dry land sailors bould
And listen unto my song,
There are but forty verses
So it won't detain you long.

There is an undefinable charm about folk-lore, be it song, dance or story, that is fascinating and compelling, a power brought about largely by its beautiful simplicity and homeliness.

The folk-songs of the sea, are, I believe, presented to us to-day as a mere shadow of their former selves. The original theme has been so parodied and adapted through the ages, that it would probably be all but unrecognisable to the actual originators, whoever they might be.

However, Sir Richard Runciman Terry has rendered us a great service by collecting and editing as many of the old songs of the sea as it was humanly possible to salve from the great deeps of oblivion. The full fruits of his learned toil have been presented to the world at large by Messrs Curwen & Co. in an attractive volume which contains (under the title "*Salt Sea Ballads*") some thirty songs and parodies, an introduction by Morley Roberts, a further introduction by Sir Richard himself, followed by an admirable series of notes explaining the why's and wherefore's of each of the songs contained in the book.

One feels that these excellent ballads of the sea might be more widely known than they are at the present time, for it is the type of material that is congenial to both singer and audience alike. It is a delight to dissect from the musical fabric and words of these songs, the doggedness, loyalty, fearlessness and great-heartedness of the old British seaman or 'Tar,' as some of the songs would have him called.

This edition may be taken as authorative, for Sir Richard Terry has gleaned these ballads, in many cases, from the lips of sailors as they sang at their work. There are, of course, many editions of sea-shanties and ballads, but few of them are actually 'sea-born.' In days gone by

any event of passing importance such as the capture or chase of an enemy vessel would bring forth a host of music-hall ditties and songs, which have in a few isolated cases been handed down to us as authentic 'sea-born' ballads. *'Tom Bowling'* is a notable instance of a shore-born song that has lived long enough, and assumed so many various guises, as to have been widely catologued as a sea-ballad.

In the course of his interesting introductory chapter, Sir Richard Terry tells of the amazing number of words one finds adapted to a single tune, and the amazing number of tunes adapted to one set of verses. "The contrast is painful between the platform performances I hear, and the memory of the same tunes I heard in childhood, crooned by the fisher-women as they sat baiting their lines by the waving bents, to the accompaniment of the sea's deep bourden."

Sea-ballads probably found birth through the efforts of sailors, who, cast out at sea for days, weeks or even months on end, endeavoured to voice some of the sentiment that flooded their hearts at the thought of their distant homes and families, or again, through the chanting of words, as they worked in unison at the windlass or sails, or still again, as a war-song against their enemies.

An anonymous friend has supplied missing verses to many of the melodies, whilst Sir Richard Terry has composed the piano parts in "a humble attempt to follow the mood of the melodies."

I sincerely hope that long after all the older type of sea-craft and sea-men have disappeared from the surface of the ocean, and while the great winds roar their wild songs to the accompaniment of the restless waters, that these old sea-ballads will still find a little corner of everlasting security in this everchanging and forgetful world of ours.

(3). FREDERICK DELIUS.

I had the good fortune, some little time ago, to hear an excellent performance of Frederick Delius's notable tone-picture *"Paris."* The performance left me with a live appreciation of this great composer's art-sense. It is only when this tone-poem is heard again and again that its hidden mysteries begin to reveal themselves. It cannot be appreciated by a casual ear.

The performance of this work had a rather pathetic interest, in view of the announcement a short while ago that Mr. Frederick Delius is fighting a lonely battle with blindness, in a peaceful old white stone house with blue shuttered windows at Grez-Sur-Loing, France. And so, it was impossible to listen to "Paris", without vividly recalling that its composer lay in his home in France, deprived of the means of savouring nature's great loveliness and the fascination of human life, all of which he so skilfully visualised and combined in "Paris—the Song of a Great City". He is unable te write music any more, and although on the occasional visits of musician friends he has attempted to dictate a composition to them, his efforts have nearly almost failed. Listening to music on the wireless and receiving rare visits from brother musicians from other countries, are the only joys to brighten this life that was darkened so tragically five years ago.

Frederick Delius was born in Bradford sixty-four years ago, and first went to live in this French village, just off one of the principal streets between Paris and Lyons, nearly thirty years ago.

"*Paris*" has called forth much comment and criticism. But although it is an early work, it is fully chcracteristic of the composer, and is one of his best works ; in fact, it is among the very best of its kind in the world of music. It is full of realistic effects, made all the more significant by reason of his judicious use of beautiful orchestration. All the resources of a full orchestra are employed to produce this tone-picture, and one remains fascinated by the richness of harmony and colour disclosed throughout the entire composition.

Delius has been accused of fumbling dreamily along in his ewn way, and occasionally "hitting on felicities by a kind of happy accident," as an English critic once put it. His music, therefore is regarded generally as something formless and weak; a something that has no definite part to fill or accomplish in the great scheme of musical art. But that is a mistake, a grave mistake, and that is where we owe Delius a heartfetl apology. For Delius has wit and delicate humour, he has a candour that is delightfully embarrassing, he has a sympathy closely allied with understanding that is second to none in the world of art. He is, in common with others. not faultless in his style ; his music is admittedly individual, clumsy when judged by canons that do not apply to it, and extremely dull to minds that are different to his. But he has other and stronger qualities that more than amply compensate for loss in other directions.

Delius did not spring into fame, neither did he spare pains when engaged upon a work. On the other hand, he should in all probability have been recognised as a genius long before he was hailed as such. None realised this more than Delius himself, and as he was also a journalist, we find him writing of this in an article that propounded the simple truths of labour and achievement in art.

"Genius is not a mushroom growth. Inspiration does not come without hard work any more than a crop of corn. There is no short cut to glory. No great work of art has ever come into the world save as the fruits of years of earnest, unremitting endeavour on the part of its creator," etc. Delius often spent ten years on a work. He has several times re-cast a composition long after it was supposedly finished.

He aspired to the lofty heights of Beethoven and his like ; his ambitions are glorious in the extreme; from the very beginning he seems to have striven to apprehend the mysteries of the human soul and to express his understanding of these mysteries in music.

Delius is of Dutch descent, and he was born, as I have mentioned elsewhere, in Bradford, in 1863. When about twenty years of age, he lived for a time in Florida on a plantation that belonged to his father. From here he drifted into the States, where he taught music for a short time, and then he went to study in Germany. In Germany, Delius had the good fortune to make the acquaintance of Grieg, which developed through the years a warm and deep friendship that gave his art a slight bias toward the elements of the Scandinavian countries.

In 1899 Delius gave a concert of his works in London. In 1907 Thomas Beecham began to perform his works freely up and down the country, so that some of the fame accorded him in Germany fell to him in England. The amount of his work would appear to be considerable, but it is difficult to account for a lot of it, for much has been published abroad. I give the following list of compositions as a guide to a few works that are fairly well known:

"*Over the Hills and Far Away*" (1895); the "*Appalacha*" orchestral variations (1902); the piano concerto (1897 1903); "*Mass of Life*" (1905); "*Paris,*" the great tone-poem (1899); "*The Village Romeo and Juliet,*" an opera (1901); "*Sea Drift,*" a cantata from Whitman (1903); "*Brigg Fair,*" an orchestral rhapsody (1907); "*The Dance Rhapsodies,*" for orchestra (1908 and 1916); "*North Country Skethes,*" for orchestra (1914 and 1916); a violin concerto (1916); a double concerto, for violin and cello (1916); the cello concerto (1916); the music for Flecker's "Hassan" (1920); a cello concerto (1921); a number of songs, choral pieces, and pieces for a small orchestra.

CHILDREN'S PAGES

(1) DR. VIKRAM'S CHILDREN.

CHAPTER XVII.

A Mad Family.

"I don't know whether dates are sold there at this season. But you can find the seeds on the roadside.

"I can't say what date-seeds are for, but am only giving you information.

"Raji talks quite like a grown-up person, repeating what she hears older people say, but in such a silly connection. One day, a patient asked her how Rukmini was related to her and at once she put on a serious face and said 'she is my mother-in-law's brother's wife'."

The end of this strange soliloquy found Seeta in hysteric laughter. She was back in Madras, all but her physical self and her heroine was present with her. As she talked to herself, she was walking round and round the room, the rapidity of her pace being regulated by the intensity of her imagination. By and by she paused near a shelf to swallow a dose of Chamberlain's Cough Remedy. As she put the bottle back, she burst into another and louder fit of laughter, which shook her frame with violent convulsions and provoked a more irritating cough.

"Seeta girl, what madness has seized you now?" asked her mother, who, pained by the cough she heard, had come upon the scene and caught her daughter holding her sides and doubled up in the effort to obtain some relief.

"Mother, I took-" and again that fit of both merriment and cough became uncontrollable. "I took, ha...ha...ha...".

Mrs. Vikram smiled and frowned at the same time. After a while, Seeta grew calm and, wiping her eyes, nose and lips on her sleeve, began again.

"I took a doze of the cough mixture mother, and without knowing what I was about, began licking the spoon. Mr Raju passing by, saw it and smiled, ha ... ha ... ha".

Mrs. Vikram felt her own nerves, giving way at the sight of Seeta shaking with laughter. She went out.

On the newly white-washed wall outside the room, there now appeared a whole art gallery of droll-looking pencil drawings recently executed. They represented no creatures of God's work, or man's rational production; for instance, there was a creature with a human face and a heavy moustache, with nose-rings and ear-rings. This being had a pair of horns, stood on all fours and displayed a pair of wings. The tail was like that of a fish and was decorated with a ribbon.

Mrs. Vikram held her breath when she saw this picture and the others. Going back to the room, she questioned Seeta about them.

"I really don't know," gasped the girl, hastening out to see.

Mohun now put in an appearance to invite his sister to join him in some novel conspiracy. Having over-heard the conversation, he exclaimed in a tone of seeming surprise.

"Why Seeta, you did those drawings, didn't you? I saw you take a pencil from my drawer and make those sketches—that was when Vasant was practising rope-walking. I looked over your shoulder and said that there was a mistake in your fox, which really ought to have had scales and cloven feet.

Seeta did not comprehend anything. She could not recollect having done a single thing of all that her brother was enumerating. But of this she was sure, and that was that often she had said and done things of which her mind had remained totally blank. But was it likely that she, who dreaded mischief, should have committed so grave a fault? But, since she could not come to any logical conculsion, she turned pale and answered,

"I suppose I must have disfigured the wall. But I don't recollect any thing".

"Idiot," cried Mohun in a tone of deep commiseration, "You can be easily duped and punished for other people's faults. Ma, can't you see that only some one taller than she must have done those figures? And who is taller than this palm tree, but I?" But please don't tell father, mummy, I shall soon make it all right."

So saying Mohun rushed out like the whirlwind and came back with a pail of white-wash and a brush. With several coatings he managed to obliterate the art gallery, though some marks threatened to show, as long as the paint was fresh.

Dr. Vikram had three guests that morning. They were such simple folk, that their country manners immensely amused Mohun, and he plotted to have some fun at their expense. Waiting till his father took them down for breakfast, he dashed upstairs with his brother and sisters.

"Let us pretend to be father and these men," he suggested.

Vasant dropped into the nearest chair declaring, "I will be father."

"I shall act Mr. Raju," Seeta stated.

Rukmini represented Mr. Krishna, and Mohun personated Mr. Dass, by putting on the latter's turban the first thing. Each one like-wise donned coats and slippers and whatever over-alls the guests had left behind them. Mohun dived into his pocket and drew out a pen-knife. Rukmini found a watch and some change in hers. Seeta discovered a kerchief and a bunch of keys in hers. Mohun invented a story for each article and began with the penknife.

"Did you notice Mr. Dass has a nose like the snout of a rhinocerus? He is ashamed of carrying it everywhere and shaves off the surface, hoping to bring it to a proper shape. This penknife he keeps for trimming his snout.

"That watch does not show the time, unless Mr. Krishna keeps on turning the hands, from second to minute, from minute to hour, the whole day long. But he wears it for the sake of fashion.

"Mr. Raju is too poor to keep any money in his pocket. So he carries a large bunch of keys to jingle like coins, and make people believe he is very rich."

The other children greeted each tale with roars of laughter. Mohun began to replace the articles in the wrong pockets.

"Mohun, what will they think, if they find their things have been handled?" cried Seeta.

Rukmini complained there was no kerchief in any of her pockets.

"The poor man could not afford even a hanky," Mohun continued, suppose we supply him with one," so saying, he tore of a bit of bandage cloth from the dispensary room and thrust it into Mr. Krishna's pocket.

"Now Mr. Vikram," he said addressing his simpering brother, "please say something."

"May I know how many children you have, Mr. Dass?" asked Vasant.

Solemn and serene grew Mohun's countenance, as the answer proceeded in grave tones.

"Don't exactly remember. But, I may say, I am blest with sixteen cherubs. Too many mouths to feed for a poor fellow like me, but can't help. Marriage dowries for the girls are out of the question."

"How many of them are boys and how many girls," Rukmini enquired.

"I must ask my wife," replied Mohun and, turning to Vasant, said, "Mr. Vikram, is anything wrong with your second daughter's brain? She grins and grimaces and chatters like a monkey. Whom does she take after?"

"She is-" began Vasant and in the excitement of a new discovery, forgot his assumed character and shrieked out,

"Mohun, Mr. Raju's shoes have no strings."

The children kept a collection of old shoe-laces, for the sake of inserting them in unserviceable balloon pipes to smoke. Mohun ran and brought a white lace and a black lace for the brown pair and began to lace them up.

"Mr. Raju has a long beard. I am tempted to plait it." Seeta remarked.

"I am tempted to set a lighted match to it," replied Mohun. Then he bagan to shake off his trappings and

called on the others to follow his example. The things were carefully replaced and the children scampered off downstairs.

(To be continued.)

H. Kaveri Bai

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(2) THE TWO BROTHERS.

Once upon a time there was a King. He had two sons, who were very wicked and cruel. They would not listen to their parents, and did not like the good things they taught them. Day by day they began to hate their parents.

Now the elder son was 18 years old and the younger son was 16. The old King did not know what to do with these bad boys. So one day he took them and put them in a boat and sent them away to sea.

They went on and on and at last they reached an Island. They got down from the boat hand-in-hand, and, when they were hungry sat down and ate the bread that their father had given them. It grew dark and they laid themselves down to sleep.

This Island belonged to a big giant who had six heads, and he always came in the night to look for his food. He got sight of the two brothers. He was very glad to find some food, for it was three days since he had had any meal. So he took them both and put them into his pockets and went to his castle. The brothers woke up and were much frightened. The giant locked them up in a room and gave them rich food, to make them nice and fat.

Every day they thought that they were going to die. The giant one day called them to dine with him, for he wished to kill them that very night. While they were dining, the elder boy saw a big magic mirror. He knew that it would take him wherever he wanted. So he wished that he and his brother should be taken to the seashore. This was done. When the giant saw this he put on a shoe, which would go a mile in one step, and chased them. He caught them and they told him their story; but he had no pity on them and beat them with his club and thus killed them.

From this we learn that "We must never be bad children."

MABEL EDNA MAHESWARI PHILIP
AGED 11.

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(3) THINGS YOU OUGHT TO KNOW.

In the *Parents' Magazine*, some very interesting questions were asked as information tests. Some of them are repeated here. You will find the answers below, but, before you look at them, try and see how many questions you can answer yourself and then verify your answers, and see if they are correct.

Questions.

1. What are the names of the young of the sheep, cow and horse?
2. What do we mix with ice to help us freeze ice-cream more quickly?
3. Who was the first President of the United States?
4. Of what is rubber made?
5. What kind of cloth is made from flax?
6. What are the Continents in order of size?
7. What are the different plants from which sugar is made?

Answers :

1. Lamb, Calf, Colt.
2. Salt.
3. Washington.
4. Sap of rubber tree.
5. Linen.
6. Asia, Africa, North America, South America, Antarctic Continent, Europe, Australia.
7. Sugar cane, Sorghum, beet, maple, palm tree.

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(4) OUR LETTER TO OUR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Dear Children,

Have you ever realised what fun you all can have at home, by getting up little theatricles among yourselves, and acting before your parents and their friends. Of course, it is not good to become too fond of acting, and always crave to be on the stage, but just occasionally to organise and produce a play among yourselves would be such fun, wouldn't it? If there are a number of brothers and sisters, you need not seek the help of children from other families, but, on the whole, it will be more friendly and interesting to bring your little friends from the neighbourhood into your programme. Then, you can choose a suitable play, or, if any of you have talent, write one yourselves, and settle the characters. A stage can be easily improvised by placing a number of low benches together as the platform, and running a large curtain in front with rings, so that it can easily be pulled aside. You should not be careless of the stage management. In fact, one of you should be in complete charge of the stage, and not take up any acting. It is much more fun to be stage manager sometimes, than act before the public. There is a great attraction in arranging the stage artistically and carefully, and then disappearing behind the scenes before the curtain goes up. Next, you must learn your parts carefully, and not forget your words on the great day. Children have a bad habit of pausing awkwardly and waiting for the prompter to prompt them. You should learn your parts well, know your cues, and be perfectly natural on the stage. Forget yourselves entirely, and think only of the person you are impersonating. Your costumes should be well-chosen and artistically put on, and you must not shirk rehearsals, until you are quite perfect. Then, you can invite the elders and their friends. Perhaps, if you care to, you can even have two or four anna tickets, in aid of some charitable institution, or as money for beggars. You cannot imagine what fun it will be, and also, it will teach you to organise things, and develop a sense of responsibility.

In the next issue, if possible, I shall publish a play suitable for you to act.

Yours sincerely,
Padmini.

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(5) OUR COMPETITION CORNER.

A prize of Rs. 3 will be given to the best essay on "A holiday in the Hills." The essay should not exceed 500 words. Only girls and boys below 15 years can try for this competiton. Send in your essays, with names, addresses and ages written distinctly, to the Editor, *The Indian Ladies' Magazine,* "Lismoyle," "Harrington Road, Chetput, Madras by June 25th. 1932. Any entries reaching us after this date will be disqualified.

RANDOM PORTRAITS OF INDIAN WOMEN.

One evening, as we were passing through the streets of a little Moffussil town, we saw many women sitting on the door-step, or in the verandah of their houses, doing nothing at all, but staring aimlessly into the street. Some chatted listlessly with their neighbours, and most of them had babies on their laps, with one or two older children hovering round them, and constantly interupting them. The absence of the masculine sex was very apparent. One could imagine where they were, out at some club or another, playing games, or walking out with their friends, or chatting and enjoying themselves in their friends' houses.

What waste of precious time, I thought, for these women to sit evening after evening doing nothing. Between five and seven is a time to enjoy oneself. One's housework will in no wise be hindered by keeping these two hours free for recreation. Why should so many of our women think it a crime to leave their houses and seek a little enjoyment?' Why should they not mingle with their fathers and husbands and brothers a little more? Why should they be for ever shy and backward, and always remember that they are women, and as such keep apart from men? There is a vast field where men and women can be comrades on an equal thoroughly harmless platform.

True, it is essential that a woman should not ever crave for excitement, but should value the importance of having a few leisure hours now and then-but it is one thing to be always on the look-out for enjoyment, and another to sit listlessly at home and not care for any fun in life. So many of our women are so self-satisfied and placid that they do not care to change their mode of living. One is glad, therefore, to notice that ladies' clubs are becoming more popular every day.

PANKAJAM.

OUR FASHION SUGGESTIONS

Jade ornaments are becoming the fashion in the West, and our Indian women can set a new vogue out here, by using jade sometimes, instead of diamonds, rubies, emeralds or pearls. The following set of jade ornaments would look very pretty indeed,—a fairly large oblong or square jade ring, a long jade and platinum brooch to pin the sari on the shoulder, a delicate jade pendant set on a thin chain, and small jade eardrops. All these worn with a light green silk sari, and a blouse of

flowered green material, and green and silver sandals or *joothies* (slippers), will make up a most charming *ensemble.*

Jewels are meant to match the sari, and they should not be worn indiscriminately, but should be chosen with taste and made to harmonise with the colour of the clothes.

We are glad to notice that most of our young girls now are wearing Indian skirts and blouses, instead of the much-abused Western frooks. A thick *Kornat* silk skirt, and a pretty blouse to match, looks very becoming for a girl, and is a very comfortable and convenient costume, much more suitable than a frock and shoes and stockings. Stockings are much too hot for this climate, especially for a girl to keep them on all day long at school. It is far better to wear a pretty skirt and blouse, and keep the feet cool and free in a loose pair of sandals.

"SISTER SUSIE."

HOUSEHOLD HINTS.

It is marvellous how easy it is for a room to look slovenly in India. Dust collects so quickly, cobwebs gather so rapidly, and stains and oils-marks on furniture show up so distinctly. It is hard indeed to keep a house scrupulously clean, but it is worth trying.

Curtains and draperies collect dust a great deal, and therefore, as few of them as possible should be used, and even these should be well-dusted often. If possible, lacey material should be avoided, as it gathers dust particles more easily.

Next, the floor should be polished, so that it cannot collect dust on its smooth surface. If the housewife dislikes polished floors, she should see that every nook and corner of the flooring is washed as often as possible with soap and water. Also, the carpets should be well-beaten outside, and dried out in the sun at least once a week.

Furniture, if not looked after carefully, becomes very dishevelled and untidy. Easy chairs should be provided with clean washable chair-backs. Upholstery is harder to keep clean, than other furniture, and the *Madras Mail* gives a good remedy which I repeat here. Upholstery should be cleaned by placing a damp cloth over it, and beaten with a light cane. The damp cloth then collects all the dust.

Finally, the roof and walls should be constantly cleaned of cobwebs, and as much air as possible should be let into the room, in order to prevent it being musty and damp.

If the house-wife attends to these small particulars, she ought to be able to keep her house more or less fresh and clean.

In order to make the house chaste and beautiful, rooms should not be crowded with cheap knick-knacks and pictures. Just a few good ones will suffice. Over-crowding a room never adds to the beauty of it.

"PADDY."

INTERESTING ITEMS.

(1) Ancient German Easter Observances.

Advancing industrialization and the improving of means of traffic have caused many ancient customs to disappear, but others still persist, especially in the rural districts. In many South Bavarian villages, one still finds the "Judas burning" and "blessing of the water" on the Saturday preceding Easter Sunday. Peasants make a pile of wood in front of the church and set fire to it in the presence of the congregation. The priest blesses the fire, and when it has burnt out, each peasant takes a stick with live embers home, and his wife lights the fire in the fireplace or stove with it. Pieces of the charred stick are also put here and there in the house, for they are believed to afford protection against fire and lightning. Some of the holy water newly blessed by the priest is also taken home in a small bottle.

"The Easter fire" is still burned in many places in the Harz. In Aschersdeben, Halberstadt, Goslar, Strobeck (the so-called "chess village"), Langels, Wasserleben, Ilfeld, Elbingerode, Rotehütte, Rubeland and many other places, one sees the Easter fires burning in the evening on the adjoining hills. They symbolize the victory of spring over winter.

A unique Easter custom is found on the island of Heligoland. Here the young men row from the mainland to the outlying dunes in leaky boats. The one whose boat takes in the most water is the winner.

In the Saxon Lausatia, "egg rolling" is indulged in, but in a different manner than that of the traditional egg rolling on the lawns of the White House in Washington. There children do the rolling, but in Lausatia the adults roll hard-boiled eggs down slopes, and children at the bottom contend for their possession. If eggs run out, oranges, apples, pretzels, etc., are used. The best place to see this is Bautzen.

In the Catholic districts of Lausatia, Easter Sunday sees processions of mounted peasants, dressed in their Sunday best and wearing top hats, singing ancient melodies, as they ride through the villages to one of the district's cloisters. The inhabitants of the villages line the roads, the women in Wendish costumes. Especially noteworthy is the procession from Crostwitz,, near Kamenz, where Lessing was born. It passes through Liebitz and Schweinwerden to the Cistercian Nunnery of Marienstern, where 60 nuns live. The riders are treated to beer in the cloister brewery, after which they ride back home.

(2) How Thuringia Welcomes the Spring.

A manuscript in the library of the Hersfeld Cloister, written in 1286, gives a report of a spring celebration held in Eisenach on the fourth Sunday in Lent of each year (March 6 this year). It relates that an effigy stuffed with straw was carried from the city in a procession and thrown into the river, "driving out the winter." The procession then returned to the city, where all kinds of booths stood on the market place and a

fair was held, and the people danced through the night.

This custom, even then centuries old, is of pagan origin. It was revived in Eisenach at the beginning of the present century, and each year attracts great crowds from the whole district around Eisenach. Weeks in advance the people begin making "summer birds," of feathers and brightly-colored stuffed bodies, which, with similarly constructed chickens and ostriches and with paper flowers, have for centuries been the chief articles sold at the many booths. Sweets and the famous Thuringian roasted sausages may also not be lacking. All houses are gaily decorated with banners and paper garlands, and life-size dolls with grotesque masks are seen everywhere.

The procession forms near the old church of St. Nicholas, which was built at the same time as the Wartburg. A mounted herald rides at the head, followed by a band and three men in mantles of plaited straw. Then comes the "wagon of winter," carrying an old man with long beard, who sits on a throne surrounded by snowclad firs, with gnomes as his court train. Skiers in old costumes, riders in heavy fur coats, and girls throwing artificial snowballs at the spectators, follow. Behind them rides another herald, announcing with silver trumpet the coming of spring, who is personified by "Sunna," the bright goddess, sitting under a canopy in a wagon decorated with flowers. Beside her is the nest of the starling, the "bird of summer." Maidens in old Thuringian costumes and school children follow.

At the viaduct over the Werra, winter suddenly flees. The herald sounds his trumpet, and the band strikes up a merry tune. Spring has conquered winter. Frau Sunna welcomes spring with a poem. The straw mantles of the three escorts of winter are taken off and burned. The procession disbands. Then come the fair, feasting and dancing.

(3) Costume Festival in the Spreewald.

Vetschau, March.—This old city in the Spreewald will repeat this year the costume festival held last year, in which some 500 girls and women took part. The tentative date is July 31. This unique district 60 miles south of Berlin, intersected by some 300 arms of the Spree, is one of the few localities in Northern Germany in which the old folk costumes have maintained themselves. The coming summer's festival will include also open-air theatrical performances in the castle park and the singing of Wendish songs, also in historic costumes.

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* *From the Information service of the Reichsbahnzentrale Fur Den Deutschen Reiseverkehr.*

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